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ABSTRACT

The typical student who completed the Phoenix Program, a pilot program for treatment of students with drug and/or alcohol problems, at the time of referral by the high school counselor, was 16 years old, failing all courses, known to local police and juvenile authorities, and receiving short-term counseling with his/her family. To determine whether the effects of the program, especially in the areas of reduction of substance abuse and improved academic functioning, persisted once the student reentered the regular school (or work) environment, a follow-up analysis and evaluation, focusing on the first 12 students to attend the program, was made. Data were collected from students, parents, Phoenix School staff, receiving school staff, and student records about program experiences, reasons for students' leaving the school, pre- and post-Phoenix grades, attendance, acts of disruptive behavior, and drug/alcohol usage. Results revealed that: (1) students who were most successful in the Phoenix Program came from a regular school placement, rather than from special schools; (2) none of the students had received disciplinary action for drug-related incidents at the time of data collection; and (3) a general pattern of great improvement in behavior, attendance, and grades of students while in the program was followed by some slippage, but, in general, substantial improvement was noted, especially in grade point averages. Two case studies are appended. (PAS)

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Montgomery County Public Schools
Rockville, Maryland

Preliminary Follow-Up Evaluation of Participants in the Phoenix School: A Pilot Drug Program

Abby Shapiro
Susan Gross

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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February, 1981

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Table of Contents

	Page
SUMMARY	1
DETAILED FINDINGS	4
Background	4
Data Collection Procedures	4
Basis for Sample Selection	4
Educational Standing of Students: Comparisons Pre-, During, and Post-Phoenix	4
Pre-and Post-Phoenix Placement of Students	4
Status of Students at Withdrawal	5
Student Behavior	9
School Attendance	9
Grades	11
Perceptions of Students, Parents, and Staff Regarding Student Behavior	11
Use of Drugs/Alcohol	11
School/Work Behavior	12
Perceptions of Students, Parents, and Staff Regarding Phoenix Program	14
Student Perceptions	14
Parent Perceptions	15
Post-Phoenix School Staff Perceptions	15
APPENDIX:	
Case Study 1	A-1
Case Study 2	A-2

SUMMARY

In response to a Board of Education request, the Department of Educational Accountability has conducted a follow-up evaluation of students who had been participants in the Phoenix School Program, a pilot program for treatment of students with drug and/or alcohol problems. The purpose of this evaluation was to determine whether the effects of the program, especially in the areas of reduction of substance abuse and improved academic functioning, persisted once the student reentered the regular school (or work) environment.[1]

This report presents the findings of the follow-up analyses focusing on the first cohort of students to attend the program. In interpreting the results, however, it is important to keep the following limitations clearly in mind:

- The study is post hoc in nature and no comparison students are available. Thus, inferences attributing any behavioral changes to participation in the Phoenix School Program must be interpreted with caution.[2]

- The sample of students available for participation in the follow-up study was small, thus making it virtually impossible to make more general conclusions. Only twelve students, ten male and two female, met the two criteria employed for eligibility in the follow-up sample: (1) they had attended the Phoenix Program for at least six months, and (2) they had left the Phoenix Program no later than September, 1980.

- The program was in its initial phase of development at the time the sample students attended. It is likely, therefore, that some modifications in program content or structure have occurred since that time and generalizations to the present program must be drawn with caution.

Findings related to student characteristics:

- Of the 12 students in the follow-up sample, only five can be considered to have "completed" the Phoenix program, i.e., having met program objectives when they left the program. Of the seven who did not complete the program, four withdrew and three were removed from the program and referred to other placements.[3]

- At present, seven of the students are situated in regular educational settings, two are in special schools for emotionally handicapped students, one is in the military, and two are employed full-time.

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[1]This evaluation effort should not be construed as a descriptive report of program activities. No attempt was made to gather data descriptive of the program but rather to describe the students who participated in it.

[2]An evaluation including pre- and postmeasures and a comparison group is currently being conducted by DEA. The preliminary results of this study should be available in the summer of 1981.

[3]The distinction between those who withdrew or were removed is one of who made the decision: the student and/or parents; or the program staff.

- Students who were the most successful in the Phoenix program tended to be those who came to Phoenix from a regular school placement. Those who came from special schools or who had been placed in home instruction did not fare as well in the Phoenix program, and tended to return to special program settings.

- None of the students had received any disciplinary actions for drug-related incidents in their post-Phoenix placement at the time of data collection. However, disciplinary actions had been recorded for disruptive behavior and attendance infractions. Students who completed the Phoenix program objectives had better records for disruptive behavior (or lack thereof) than did those students who had not completed the program, but their attendance was worse.

- There is a general pattern of great improvement in behavior, attendance, and grades while students are in the Phoenix program, followed by some slippage once the students leave Phoenix to be placed in a less structured environment. However, to date, most of the students have not regressed completely to their pre-Phoenix behavior, and in fact, substantial improvement is still noted in grade-point-averages (from D-minus pre-Phoenix to C post-Phoenix).

Perceptions of Programmatic Strengths and Weakness:

Strengths:

- The majority of students and their parents reported that the students reduced their drug/alcohol usage after participation in the pilot drug program and the reports of receiving school staff confirmed this. Few students (2 of the 12) became completely drug free but almost all reported changes in the desired direction. The degree of change was greater for in-school than out of school usage, with in-school usage reportedly being virtually eliminated. The students showing the greatest progress were those who completed the program objectives before leaving Phoenix.

- Receiving school staff, as well as parents and students, reported that the program did an excellent job in educating students to the dangers of substance abuse. The drug education component was considered to be an outstanding feature of the program.

- The continuing concern of Phoenix staff for students who completed the program was perceived as a program strength. Phoenix staff met with receiving school staff, and provided assistance in program planning and counseling strategies. Parents and students reported that the Phoenix staff continue to telephone and visit students; and several reported that the Phoenix staff brought students back to Phoenix to speak with current Phoenix students. These activities were viewed as evidence of continued concern on the part of Phoenix staff for these students' welfare.

Weaknesses:

- The lack of intensive psychological counseling/therapy during Phoenix participation, as well as lack of ongoing support post-Phoenix, were cited as major program weaknesses by receiving school staff and parents. It was felt that the services provided by Phoenix did not meet the needs of students whose drug usage was related to severe emotional problems.

- Reports of the post-Phoenix receiving school staff indicate that the academic program at Phoenix is not sufficiently challenging or varied for the majority of Phoenix School participants. Therefore, some students were not adequately prepared to resume their educational programs when they returned to a regular school setting.

- Parents of students who withdrew or were removed from Phoenix did not feel the program met their childrens' needs. Additionally, parents of students who were referred elsewhere indicated that there was no further contact maintained with the Phoenix program.

Overall Perceptions:

- Most parents and school staff said that they would recommend the program for other students experiencing drug/alcohol abuse problems. The program was endorsed even in those cases where staff felt that particular students were still experiencing difficulties. Students recommended the program to others as well; however, some students qualified this recommendation by stating that they would only recommend Phoenix for those students who are serious about eliminating their substance abuse problems.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Background

On December 12, 1980 the Board of Education of the Montgomery County Public Schools asked the Department of Educational Accountability (DEA) to produce a follow-up report on students who had been participants in the Phoenix School Program, a pilot program for treatment of students with drug and/or alcohol problems. The purpose of this evaluation was to determine whether the effects of the program, especially in the areas of reduction of substance abuse and improved academic functioning, persisted once the student reentered the regular school (or work) environment. Presented in this report are summary statistics on all 12 Phoenix Program participants included in the study. The appendix contains two composite case studies which were created by combining data from several students in order to maintain confidentiality. Case Study 1 presents a composite study of the students who completed the program; Case Study 2 presents a composite study of the students who did not complete the program.

Data Collection Procedures: For this follow-up study data were collected from several sources: students, parents, Phoenix School staff, receiving school staff, and student records. Data were collected regarding program experiences; reasons for the students' leaving the school; pre- and post-Phoenix grades, attendance, acts of disruptive behavior, and drug/alcohol usage.

Basis for Sample Selection: Students who met the following criteria were selected for participation in the study: (1) they had attended the Phoenix Program for at least six months, and (2) they had discontinued program participation no later than September, 1980. Twelve students, ten male and two female, were found to meet these criteria. For these students length of participation in Phoenix averaged nine months, ranging from seven to sixteen months. The average length of time that these students had been out of the Phoenix program when the follow-up data were collected was 8 months, with a range of 5 to 12 months.

Table 1 presents the sex, race, age, and geographic location for the twelve students in the sample.

Educational Standing of Students: Comparisons Pre-, During, and Post-Phoenix

Pre- and Post-Phoenix Placement of Students: Prior to entry into the Phoenix program, seven students were in regular school programs, four were in residential programs or receiving home or hospital instruction, and one had dropped out of school. Upon exit from the Phoenix program, seven students were placed in regular school programs, two were placed in programs for emotionally handicapped students, one had dropped out of school to join the military, one had graduated and entered college and one was enrolled in a GED program (see Table 2). Currently, seven students are in regular educational settings (six in MCPS and one in a private school); two are in special schools (one MCPS and one private), one is in the military, and two are employed full-time. For approximately half the students, pre- and post-Phoenix placements are similar or identical.

TABLE 1
Demographic Data for Phoenix Follow-Up Sample

Background Variables	Number of Students
Sex	
Male	10
Female	2
Race	
White	11
Black	1
Age at Entry Into Phoenix Program	
14	2
15	5
16	3
17	2
MCPS Administrative Area	
Area 1	2
Area 2	8
Area 3	2

Status of the Students at Withdrawal: It is important in interpreting the study findings to note that of the 12 students in the sample, only five can be considered to have "completed" the program, i.e., left having met program objectives. Seven students were unable to complete the program due to emotional/behavioral difficulties; four withdrew and three were removed from the program and referred to other placements. Table 3 presents the pre- and post-Phoenix educational placements by status of the students at withdrawal. Four of the five students who completed the program came from regular educational programs, compared to three out of the seven who withdrew or were removed from the program. Also, four out of seven students who came to Phoenix from regular school programs were able to complete the program objectives,[4] compared to only one out of five who came from more intensive instructional programs or who were not enrolled in school. Thus, there is an apparent link between the prior placement history of the student and probability of success in completing program objectives.

[4]One student who did not complete the program objectives had been placed in a regular program for just one year prior to placement in Phoenix. For two years prior to that, this student was in special programs for students with emotional problems.

TABLE 2

Pre- and Post-Phoenix Educational Placements for Phoenix Follow-up Sample

Type of Placement	Number of Students in Placement	
	Pre-Phoenix	Post-Phoenix
Regular Educational Program	5	6(a)
Regular Program With 1-3 Hours Daily of Special Services	2	1(b)
Day School or Residential Program for Emotionally Handicapped/Substance Abusers	1(c)	2(d)
Home Instruction/Hospital Care	3	0
GED Program	0	1
Graduated	0	1
Dropped Out	1(c)	1(e)

(a) Four members of this group were in a regular program both pre- and post-Phoenix.

(b) Student received resource room services pre- and post-Phoenix.

(c) Student is currently working full-time.

(d) Both students were suspended from school prior to Phoenix due to drug involvements and/or violent behavior.

(e) Student is reported to be in the military.

TABLE 3

Pre-and Post-Phoenix Placement by Status at Exit from Phoenix

Type of Placement	Number of Students in Placement	
	Pre-Phoenix	Post-Phoenix
Students Who Completed Program Objectives:[a]		
Regular Education Program	3	4[b]
Regular Program With 1-3 Hours Daily of Special Services	1	0
Day School or Residential Program for Emotionally Handicapped/Substance Abusers	1	0
Home Instruction/Hospital Care	0	0
GED Program	0	0
Graduated	0	1
Dropped Out	0	0
Students Who Did Not Complete Program Objectives:[a]		
Regular Education Program	2	2[c]
Regular Program With 1-3 Hours Daily of Special Services	1	1[c]
Day School or Residential Program for Emotionally Handicapped/Substance Abusers	0	2
Home Instruction/Hospital Care	3	0
GED Program	0	1
Graduated	0	0
Dropped Out	1	1

[a]Five students completed the Phoenix objectives and were returned to other programs; four students withdrew from the program prior to completion of their drug-related objectives; and three students were removed from the program, two because their emotional problems interferred with their performance in program objectives, and one because of continued substance abuse.

[b]Three of these four students were in a regular program both pre- and post-Phoenix placement

[c]One student was in a regular program both pre- and post-Phoenix.

TABLE 4

Average Number of Disciplinary Actions[a] In Which Students Were Involved

Nature of Offense	Students Who Completed Program			Students Who Did Not Complete Program		
	Pre-Phoenix (8.6 Months) N=5	At Phoenix (12.4 Months) N=5	Post-Phoenix (4 Months) N=4[b]	Pre-Phoenix (9.6 Months) N=7	At Phoenix (9.3 Months) N=7	Post-Phoenix (4 Months) N=5[b]
Disruptive Behavior, Violence, or Non-Substance Related Unlawful Activities	0.4[c]	0.2	0.0	1.4	1.3	1.0
Substance Abuse, Substance Related Unlawful Activities	1.0	0.4	0.0	1.3	1.3	0.0
Class Cutting, Tardiness, or Truancy	1.2	0.0	0.5	1.4	0.3	0.2

[a]Disciplinary actions include expulsions, suspensions, detentions, referrals, reprimands, and loss of credit.

[b]Students who are no longer enrolled in school programs are not included in this group.

[c]Numbers represent averages, obtained by dividing the number of disciplinary actions by the number of students in the group.

Student Behavior: Incidences of behaviors requiring disciplinary action were recorded for the 12 sample students, and comparisons were made between behaviors pre- and post-Phoenix enrollment, as well as indices of behavior while the students were enrolled in Phoenix School. Table 4 presents these data. It may be noted that students who have completed the Phoenix objectives have better behavior patterns in school than their peers who did not complete the objectives. However, it must also be noted that they had better behavior records prior to their enrollment in Phoenix as well. It is noteworthy, however, that no students in either group have had any drug-related disciplinary actions in their post-Phoenix placement.

The extent to which post-Phoenix behavior is directly linked to participation in Phoenix or to pre-Phoenix behavior cannot be determined. Students who completed the Phoenix objectives had only slightly less pre-Phoenix incidence of disciplinary actions for substance abuse and attendance factors, but were considerably less disruptive in school than were their counterparts who did not finish the program objectives. Additionally, while the two groups of students appear similar in substance abuse and attendance in their post-Phoenix placement, the latter group continues to be more disruptive in school than those students who completed the program objectives.

School Attendance: In the previous section, a slight decrease in attendance-related disciplinary actions was noted for the students, post-Phoenix, as compared to pre-Phoenix (see Table 4). Analysis of the average daily attendance (ADA) for these students shows that, overall, attendance improved for students while in the Phoenix program (88.6 percent ADA), with post-Phoenix attendance slightly better than pre-Phoenix attendance (80.1 percent vs. 78.7 percent ADA). Additionally, post-Phoenix attendance of the students who completed the program is substantially worse than attendance of those who did not complete the program (see Table 5). This finding is at least partially explained by the fact that three of the students who did not complete the program, and who had poor pre-Phoenix attendance, are no longer included in the post-Phoenix attendance shown below. This is because two are no longer enrolled in a school program, and one is in a residential program. In addition, it should be noted that there is substantial variation in attendance among students completing the program, with the overall attendance rate being sharply decreased by the twenty-seven percent attendance rate of one student.

TABLE 5

Average Daily Attendance (%) of Sample Students Pre-, During, and Post-Phoenix

Student Group	Sample Student Number	ADA Pre-Phoenix	ADA During Phoenix	ADA Post-Phoenix	Post-Phoenix Educational Setting
	1	21	94	27	Regular
Students Who	2	96	98	65	Regular
Completed The	3	97	91	94	Regular
Program	4	85	100	92	Regular
	5	72	85	N/A	Graduate
Average for Students Completing the Program		74.2	93.6	69.5	
	6	87	88	82	Regular
	7	89	89	86	Regular
Students Who Did	8	96	87	97	Private Day
Not Complete	9	88	88	98	Private Day
the Program	10	89	69	N/A	Residential
	11	36	83	N/A	GED
	12	88	91	N/A	Drop-out
Average for Students Who Did Not Complete the Program		81.9	85.0	90.8	
Average for All Students		78.7	88.6	80.1	

Grades: Grade-point-averages were computed for the students' final marking period in the school setting prior to Phoenix enrollment; their final marking period at Phoenix, and the first marking period in their current school setting. Overall, students' grades in their post-Phoenix placement are far superior to the pre-Phoenix grades, with the students who completed the program performing slightly better in their post-Phoenix grades than the students who did not complete the program (see Table 6).

TABLE 6

Grade-Point-Averages for Sample Students Pre-, During, and Post-Phoenix

Student Group	GPA Pre-Phoenix N=12	GPA During Phoenix N=12	GPA Post-Phoenix N=9
Students Who Completed Program	0.5*	3.3	2.2
Students Who Did Not Complete Program	0.6	2.1	1.9
All Students	0.6	2.6	2.0

*Grades were converted to numerical values as follows: A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, and E=0.

Perceptions of Students, Parents, and Staff Regarding Student Behavior

Use of Drugs/Alcohol: Students, parents, and current school staff were asked about the current use of drugs/alcohol, compared with the students' pre-Phoenix experience. All nine students who responded to the survey reported that they currently do not use alcohol or drugs during school or work; however, one parent reported that his/her child currently uses drugs/alcohol during school or work, and in two cases school staff indicated that the student currently uses drugs/alcohol at school. The frequency of usage at school by these two students is estimated to be once a week in each case. This is a marked drop in in-school substance use compared with these students' pre-Phoenix usage, which was nearly daily according to the students involved.

Substance use outside of the school or work setting is still occurring for seven of the nine students, according to self-report and the perceptions of parents and school staff. However, the frequency of usage for these students is reported to be less than prior to Phoenix participation,[5] and approximately the same as their usage at the time of exit from Phoenix. Table 7 presents the data obtained from students, parents, and school staff concerning student usage of drugs or alcohol outside of school or work.

[5]Reported substance use outside of school or work prior to Phoenix participation averaged 4-7 times a week.

TABLE 7

Reported Usage of Drugs or Alcohol Outside School or Work

Source of Data	Number Responding	Number Reporting Use Outside School/Work	Reported Frequency Of Use (Average)	Number Reporting Non-Use Outside School/Work	Number Unaware of Use or Non-Use Outside School/Work
Student	9	7	2-4 times/week	2	NA
Parent	11	7	1-2 times/week	3	1
School Staff (8 counselors, one teacher)	9	7	2-4 times/week	2	0

Substances which the students reported using include: marijuana (all seven students); hashish (six students); beer, wine, and hard liquor (four-six students); and tranquilizers, uppers, and downers without doctors' prescriptions (two-three students). Occasional use of angel dust, hallucinogens (LSD, etc.), and narcotics such as opium, morphine, and cocaine were also reported by one or two students. Parents indicated knowledge of students' use of marijuana (six parents), beer (five parents), wine (one parent) and cocaine (one parent). Parents did not indicate knowledge of use of any other substance.

Eight of nine students reported that they reduced their use of drugs/alcohol, and that Phoenix helped change their attitudes towards substance use. The ninth student reported that a prior program had induced these changes in him/her. Eight of eleven parents indicated that their children had reduced their use of drugs/ alcohol while at Phoenix, and nine parents felt the students were using substances much less frequently now than before Phoenix. Seven parents and seven of nine school staff attributed changes in the students' attitudes regarding substance use to the Phoenix program. One parent had no knowledge of his/her child's use now and while at Phoenix, or the child's attitudes towards drugs/alcohol. Two students are currently participating in a drug or alcohol treatment program.

Differences in drug/alcohol usage were observed between those students who completed the Phoenix objectives and those who did not (see Table 8). A smaller proportion of students who finished the program are using drugs/ alcohol outside of school or work, and they are using drugs/alcohol less frequently than those students who did not complete the program.

School/Work Behavior: All nine students reported that currently they are having no problems at school or work; however, some parents and school staff reported that the students are having problems at school or work. Table 9 presents the school staffs' assessments of current student performance in school. The students appear to be doing best in their adjustment to their current program and in classroom behavior, and worst in academic areas.

TABLE 8

Reported Usage of Drugs or Alcohol Outside School or Work for Students Who Did/Did Not Complete Phoenix Program Objectives

	Students Who Completed Program*				Students Who Did Not Complete Program*			
Source of Data	Number Reporting Use Outside School/Work	Reported Frequency of Use (Average)	Number Reporting Non-Use Use Outside School/Work	Usage Unknown	Number Reporting Use Outside School/Work	Reported Frequency of Use (Average)	Number Reporting Non-Use Use Outside School/Work	Usage Unknown
Student	2	2-4 times a week	2	0	5	2-3 times a week	0	0
Parent	3	less than once a week	1	1	3	2-7 times a week	2	1
School Staff	1	once a day	2	1	3	once a week	0	2

*Figures based on completed surveys: 9 students, 11 parents, and 9 receiving school staff.

TABLE 9

Post-Phoenix Staff Ratings of Current Student Performance

Performance Area	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Adjustment to Current Program	2	6	1	0
Classroom Behavior	2	5	1	1
Classroom Participation	1	5	3	0
Academic Functioning	0	3	5	1
Relations With Staff/Authority	1	7	1	0
Relations With Peers	0	6	3	0

Two out of four school staff report that their students who completed the program objectives are having attendance problems. Of the five school staff who had students who did not complete the program objectives, all indicated that the students are having emotional problems, two indicated that the students are having academic problems, and one reported that the student is having attendance problems.

Perceptions of Students, Parents, and Staff Regarding Phoenix Program

Student Perceptions: The students rated the Phoenix program as excellent to fair, with three each rating it excellent, good, or fair, respectively. Particular features of the program that students liked include: concern of Phoenix staff for the students; wilderness trips; supportiveness of the peer group sessions; and the inducements provided by the reward/privilege system. Likes far outweighed dislikes, but some students disliked the punishments associated with the reward system; the lack of challenge of the academic program; the lack of a post-Phoenix support group; and having been placed in a special school such as Phoenix.

All nine students reported that the Phoenix staff helped them with other problems in addition to substance-related problems. These included family problems, problems in their social lives, and problems in their relationships with each other. All nine felt that the Phoenix staff cared about them as individuals and were concerned about how their lives turned out. Six of the students would recommend Phoenix to their friends with drug/alcohol problems, and the other three would recommend the program only to those friends who had a strong desire to stop their substance abuse.

Eight students reported that the Phoenix program had changed their attitudes and knowledge about drugs/alcohol. Major changes included: awareness of the consequences of substance abuse; realization of their use of substances as an escape from problems; and recognition of the impact of their substance abuse on other family members.

Parent Perceptions: Three parents rated the Phoenix program as excellent, five rated it as good, and three gave a rating of fair. Parents indicated the small class size, field trips, concern of staff, and counseling support as positive programmatic aspects. Things parents disliked included: transportation difficulties; inadequate time or resources for parent/staff communication; lack of relevant training for parents; and inadequate academic preparation for future reentry into a regular school. Two parents questioned the appropriateness of removing a student from a drug abuse program because of continued drug use.

All parents indicated that the Phoenix staff helped the students with other problems in addition to drug/alcohol problems, including: academic areas, behavior, and family interactions. Seven parents reported that the Phoenix program met the students' needs, two gave a qualified yes, and two parents said it did not meet students' needs.

Nine parents reported that, while at Phoenix, their child's school work improved; seven indicated that family relationships had improved; and four reported that the student felt better, appeared less depressed, and stayed out of trouble. Improved relationships with family members reportedly have been maintained post-Phoenix; but parents reported a slight slippage in the gains in school work, student self-concept, and avoidance of trouble.

Eight parents indicated that the program had helped them to better understand their child. They cited meetings with other parents and feedback, education, and counseling as contributory factors in this understanding. Nine parents would recommend the Phoenix program to others.

Half the parents indicated that they and their child had received sufficient help in the post-Phoenix adjustment period, and half did not. The reasons given for help being or not being sufficient were virtually bi-polar: transition support/lack of transition support; staff follow-up/lack of staff follow-up; and feedback from staff/lack of feedback from staff.

Post-Phoenix School Staff Perceptions: Seven of the nine post-Phoenix school staff felt the Phoenix program had met the needs of the students in the area of substance abuse, but only five felt their academic needs had been met, and only four felt their emotional/behavioral needs had been met. Cited deficiencies included the lack of a stimulating program for academically talented students and lack of ongoing emotional/psychological support for students both during and post- Phoenix.

Six post-Phoenix school staff felt that Phoenix staff had assisted in the student's transition and adjustment into the post-Phoenix program, and five felt the assistance was sufficient. School staff reported the need for strategies to use in the post-Phoenix setting to continue the progress begun at Phoenix, as well as the need for time and resources to meet more regularly with Phoenix staff. All nine school staff would recommend the Phoenix program for other students, some qualifying this recommendation with the need for a stronger academic program and ongoing emotional/psychological support.

APPENDIX: CASE STUDIES

Case Study 1: The Typical Student Who Completed The Phoenix Program

Typically, the student who completed the Phoenix Program was 16 years old at entry and attended the program for twelve months.[1] Previously, he had been enrolled in a regular educational program in a regular setting. His Cognitive Ability Test scores were in the seventh stanine. Prior disciplinary actions included suspensions, detentions, and loss of credit. The majority of the infractions were related to attendance or substance abuse, rather than related to violent or disruptive behavior. At the time of the student's referral to Phoenix, he was failing in all courses, and had a history of class failures, withdrawals, and incompleted courses. He was known to local police and Juvenile Services, having been involved in illegal activities such as drug dealing and theft. He and his family had received short-term counseling at a public counseling center.

The student was referred to Phoenix by his high school counselor, the reasons for referral being chronic truancy and inability to function in a regular school setting as a result of substance abuse. He attended Phoenix during one summer school session and one full school year. He indicated upon entry that his substance use was nearly daily both in and out of school. While at Phoenix he maintained a 93 percent average daily attendance rate and a 3.3[2] grade point average. Upon completion of the Phoenix program, his substance use was estimated by him to be less than once a month in school, and about four times a month outside of school.

The student is currently enrolled in a regular school, in a Cooperative Work Experience/On-Job-Training program, i.e., half-day in school and half-day employment. He is maintaining a 2.2 grade point average; his school attendance continues to be a problem with an average daily attendance of 70 percent. There is no record of any disciplinary actions since his return to his regular school program. His current self-reported substance use, seven months after completing the Phoenix program, has decreased to not at all during school, and remains once or twice a week outside of school. His parents and current school staff concur with that assessment. His parents' description of him prior to Phoenix is of a potential drop-out who was alienated from their family and society, who was destroying family relationships, and wasting his life. His parents feel the care and concern of Phoenix staff, the drug education, and the support of the peer counseling groups were instrumental in changing his attitude toward substance usage, and giving him the confidence and encouragement he needed to rehabilitate himself.

The student reported that the program gave him the opportunity to participate with peers in social and recreational activities without being "stoned," and that the staff introduced him to responsible ways of coping with his problems, encouraged and praised him, and educated him to the physical and social consequences of substance abuse.

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[1] Of the 12 students in the sample, there were 10 males, 2 females; the typical student will, therefore, be referred to in the case studies as "he."

[2] A = 4.0, B = 3.0, C = 2.0, D = 1.0

Case Study 2: The Typical Student Who Did Not Complete the Phoenix Program

Typically, the student who did not complete the Phoenix Program was 15 years old at entry and attended the program for nine months. He had previously been enrolled in a special educational placement, and had a history of special services. His Cognitive Ability Test scores were in the fourth to fifth stanine. Prior disciplinary actions included expulsions, suspensions, and referrals, with the majority of infractions involving verbal and physical threats to staff and peers, and seriously disruptive and/or dangerous behavior. At the time of the student's referral to Phoenix, he was failing in all courses, and had a history of class failures, withdrawals, and incompleted courses. He was known to local police and Juvenile Services, having been involved in illegal activities such as drug dealing, assault, and vandalism. The student was referred to Phoenix by his Pupil Personnel Worker, the reasons for referral being seriously disruptive behavior and inability to function in a regular school setting as a result of substance abuse. He indicated upon entry that his substance use was nearly daily both in and out of school.

The student attended Phoenix for nine months. While in the program he maintained an average daily attendance rate of 81 percent and a grade point average of 2.1. During his enrollment at Phoenix he was suspended once for disruptive behavior and twice for use of drugs in school. Typical behaviors included acting out, insubordination, fighting, and the use and distribution of drugs or drug paraphernalia in school.

Phoenix staff counseled him on the program regulations to which he had agreed upon entry, i.e., to make an effort to reduce substance abuse and refrain from substance usage in school. He and the staff eventually acknowledged that he was unable or unwilling to abide by program regulations. The student subsequently withdrew from Phoenix. He was referred to the Area Admissions Review and Dismissal Committee (AARD) for a more appropriate placement.

The student is currently in a special educational placement. He reports that he decreased his substance usage considerably while at Phoenix, and that it continues to decrease. His parents and staff concur with that assessment. He and his parents note that Phoenix staff educated him to the physical dangers of his substance abuse, and that he no longer uses "heavy" drugs or hard liquor as a result of the drug education program. Current school staff report that participation in Phoenix gave impetus to the student's current rehabilitative progress. They note that at Phoenix, the student saw his substance abuse as a problem for the first time. The student reports he felt "nagged" by staff and peers in the counseling groups. While Phoenix staff were tolerant of him, he notes, students who had stopped using drugs were not. Current staff report that while his is making progress in reducing his substance usage, his emotional problems are an obstacle to his complete rehabilitation. He is currently receiving individual therapy.

Since entering his current educational placement four months ago, there have been no substance-related disciplinary actions. He has, however, received detentions and formal reprimands for verbal abuse of staff and peers, and for leaving the building. He is maintaining a 2.0 grade point average in an individualized program.